

# BUSINESS & COMMERCE

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*The City and County have experienced significant increases in industrial and commercial development over the last several decades. Numerous new shopping centers, office complexes, and industrial facilities have been built – representing valuable economic resources for the community.*

*Lincoln remains the county's dominate home to both the industrial and commercial sectors of the local economy. Virtually all of the recent growth in commercial space – that is, retail, office, and service uses – has occurred within the city limits of Lincoln. Most manufacturing expansion has also taken place in Lincoln with a few industries locating in the City of Waverly. This clustering of industrial and commercial activity in the City of Lincoln has been completed in accordance with the goals of the previous Comprehensive Plan.*

*This section of the Plan examines in further detail the status of existing industrial and commercial development in the city and county.*

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## INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Major industrial facilities in the area include Kawasaki Manufacturing, Goodyear, Archer Daniels Midland (ADM), and Burlington Northern-Santa Fe Railroad. During the past decade, a few industries who were located outside of Lincoln — such as Kawasaki and Crete Carrier Corporation trucking – have been annexed into the city and provided with city services.

As of January 1, 2001, there were approximately 9,900 acres of land zoned for industrial use in the Lincoln urban area. The amount of used industrial acres grew from 1,898 acres in 1990 to over 2,773 acres by 2001. This is an increase of 875 acres, or a 46 percent increase in land area during the 11 year period.

While only about one third of the industrially zoned land is presently in use, there is a commonly held concern about the lack of available industrial sites located outside of the 100 year floodplain and with utilities. One survey indicated that nearly 45 percent of the city's industrially zoned land was in the floodplain. Also, an appreciable amount of the available vacant industrial land is in the Air Park area. This land is owned by the Lincoln Airport Authority but is only available for leasing.

During the 1990's several new "Employment Centers" were designated in the City-County Comprehensive Plan. These centers were intended to be a mix of light industrial, office, and retail uses. Development is underway on two of these centers at 14<sup>th</sup> and Pine Lake Road, and North 33<sup>rd</sup> and Folkways Boulevard. Another potential site at N. 84<sup>th</sup> and Adams is yet undeveloped and without industrial zoning at this time.

## COMMERCE CENTERS

As of January 1, 2001, there were approximately 33,000,000 square feet (SF) of occupied commercial space for retail, office, and service uses in the Lincoln area.

This is an increase of approximately 8.65 million square feet of commercial space from 1990. This represents an increase of 35 percent during the 11 year period. The greatest increase over that time was in the office sector. Service uses include entertainment services (e.g., movie theaters), warehousing and self storage, and personal/ business services (e.g., beauty salons and repair businesses).

For the purpose of comprehensive planning, Commerce Centers are divided into three separate size categories. The variations in size distinguish between the uses occurring in the centers and the differing impacts the centers have on adjacent land uses and the public infrastructure. The three categories of Commerce Centers are:

- 1 - Regional Centers (R): over 1 million square feet of floor area
- 2 - Community Centers (C): from 300,000 to 1 million square feet
- 3 - Neighborhood Centers (N): from 50,000 to 300,000 square feet

### REGIONAL CENTERS

The Comprehensive Plan currently identifies six Regional Centers: Downtown, the Gateway Area, SouthPointe Pavilions, the North 27<sup>th</sup> Street Area, the UNL Technology Park, and the 84<sup>th</sup> & Highway 2 area. Some of these centers already have over 1 million square feet of built space, while others have the potential for reaching this level of development.

Downtown continues to contain the largest concentration of commercial space in the County with over 10 million square feet of occupied space in 2001. This represents nearly 30 percent of the total occupied space in the County.



Downtown continues to be the largest single concentration of office space and government services. The University of Nebraska-Lincoln's main campus also adds significantly to the number of employees in Downtown.

Westfield Shoppingtown Gateway, built in the 1960's, was Lincoln's first suburban shopping mall. The mall itself includes just over 1 million square feet of space. SouthPointe Pavilions at South 27<sup>th</sup> and Pine Lake Road, and Lincoln Crossing at North 27<sup>th</sup> & Superior Street were first designated as potential commercial centers in the 1977 Comprehensive Plan. Neither center began development until the 1990's. SouthPointe Pavilions offers an open air mall setting with over 700,000 square feet included in the mall complex itself, with 1.3 million square feet approved for the overall intersection at 27<sup>th</sup> and Pine Lake Road. Lincoln Crossing is part of a large concentration of "big box" and auto oriented centers ranging from Cornhusker Highway to Interstate 80 along North 27<sup>th</sup> Street. Within this wide commercial corridor, there are still over 4 million square feet of additional commercial space with approved zoning that is yet to be built.

The UNL Technology Park was also approved in 1990's. It is located in the Highlands development at Northwest 1<sup>st</sup> and Highlands Boulevard. The Technology Park is approved for over 1.3 million square feet of space — only about a quarter of this potential space has been built at this time. The most

recent Regional Center at 84<sup>th</sup> and Highway 2 was first approved as part of the 1994 Comprehensive Plan. The Center includes the potential for 1.9 million square feet of space. Initial site grading began in the year 2001.

## COMMUNITY CENTERS

There are several existing Community Centers ranging in size from approximately 300,000 square feet to nearly 1 million square feet. Williamsburg Village — at 40<sup>th</sup> and Old Cheney Road in south Lincoln — is among the largest of these centers. It includes the greatest mix of office and retail space among existing centers. Community Centers also include single use office parks, such as the State Farm Office Park at 84<sup>th</sup> and O Street, and Lincoln Benefit Life/ Firethorn Office Park at 84<sup>th</sup> and Van Dorn. Both of these sites reflect a trend toward large corporate offices to locate single use office parks. Edgewood Shopping Center at 56<sup>th</sup> and Old Cheney Road reflects a large retail oriented Community Center.

## NEIGHBORHOOD CENTERS

Lincoln has numerous small neighborhood centers ranging from 50,000 to 300,000 SF. Neighborhood centers range from older small pedestrian oriented town centers, like Havelock, College View and University Place to brand new large grocery store dominated centers such as at 70<sup>th</sup> & Pioneers Boulevard or Coddington Ave and West A Street. Many of these centers are several decades old. Several have recently experienced significant changes in tenants or vacant space as some stores either close or move to newer centers.

## ETHNIC COMMERCIAL DISTRICTS

Lincoln's neighborhoods exhibit a healthy range of diversity, including housing types, people, and businesses. New Americans from around the world and residents from within the United States have resettled in Lincoln, changing the face of Lincoln's growing population, neighborhoods and local businesses.



Lincoln's ethnic commercial areas are relatively small, serving primarily the immediate neighborhood. An ethnic commercial area is intrinsically connected to the surrounding residential neighborhoods by providing new residents a greater sense of familiarity and safety, as they commonly have concentrations of persons with like ethnic backgrounds. In addition, goods and services are typically provided by ethnically-owned businesses that accommodate cultural and social needs.

Ethnic districts and centers present a real opportunity for economic development and cultural expression. Ethnic areas vary according to their primary objectives and priorities, ranging from revitalizing a specific community to promoting ethnic awareness to maximizing sales of goods and services. Lincoln's ethnic areas exist primarily to provide social, cultural, goods and services, and health and human service needs of ethnic residents.

While there are ethnic neighborhoods throughout Lincoln, they are typically located in the older neighborhoods surrounding the Downtown business area. Of these neighborhoods, North 27<sup>th</sup> Street with its diverse businesses is one example of an ethnic commercial area in Lincoln.

The market demand and relatively less expensive commercial space make North 27<sup>th</sup> Street an attractive locale for owner-run startup businesses. The ethnic commercial uses along North 27<sup>th</sup> Street are relatively dispersed, auto-oriented with parking lots fronting most businesses facing the arterial streets.

A combination of available residential and commercial property with lower rents has contributed to the creation of Lincoln's emerging ethnic areas. These areas are close to ethnic and cultural centers, community facilities, museums, performance space, religious complexes, and health and human service agencies.

## COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE COUNTY

The City of Waverly — with its proximity to the City of Lincoln and Interstate 80 — has had the largest gains in commercial and industrial development in the county during recent years. Relatively little new space has been built in other areas of the county, although occupancy of existing space appears relatively stable. Few towns have populations large enough to support substantial commercial space; Firth and Bennet have populations just over 500 and only Hickman and Waverly have populations over 1,000 people.

Most new commercial development has occurred in incorporated communities — be it Lincoln or the twelve incorporated cities and towns. Only a few small commercial sites exist outside of Lincoln, with the Bennet Truck Stop on Highway 2 and the commercial and industrial uses at Highway 77 and Saltillo Road being the largest two areas.